

# Shifting the Cans of Canned Drama From Scene to Scene

Photoplay Exchange Manager Tells How Films Are Sent From Theater to Theater.

NEEDS EXPERT HANDLING

Pictures That Are Shown in Washington One Day May Go to Richmond the Next.

By FRANK B. SPURRIER, Manager, Washington V. S. L. E. Exchange.

One of the angles of the moving picture business which the general public is probably not cognizant of is the routing and looking of films. When the average motion picture patron sits in a theater at half-past ten or quarter to eleven at night seeing a picture, he does not realize that this same print will probably be working at 2 o'clock the next afternoon from 300 to 400 miles away. One of the most important and serious problems confronting the exchange manager is to secure the greatest degree of efficiency in his booking and shipping departments.

An exhibitor in Washington who is disappointed in not receiving his shows has the advantage over his brother exhibitor in a small town, in that he simply goes to an exchange and secures an emergency show, announces on his screen that the show that was advertised failed to arrive, and outside of a few sarcastic remarks, that is the end of the matter.

Small Town Exhibitors' Problem. But the exhibitor down in the small towns of North Carolina and a more difficult problem. In the majority of instances he has advertised a special feature for from ten days to two weeks in advance on his screen, with heralds, putting out his paper and using newspaper space liberally.

When the train pulls in and the express agent announces that his show is not there, he naturally becomes somewhat excited. Usually his first recourse is to the long-distance telephone. He is absolutely helpless, because he cannot secure an emergency show and his house is dark.

The general public, or at least a great part of it, is very skeptical and often very unfair in remarks to the local exhibitor. The exchange manager looks up the trouble and finds that his exhibitor has no show for various reasons. It is possible that the express company has failed to get the show off, or routed it wrong. In justice, however, to the express companies this very rarely happens for films are handled under a special arrangement, and the best service and the closest attention is given to getting them to their destination in the shortest possible time.

However, it may be that the show was not routed correctly, or that the shipping department of the exchange shipped it by the wrong express company. It sometimes happens that the shows become mixed and the wrong show is shipped to the exhibitor. To reduce these mistakes to a minimum is the most important problem confronting the exchange manager.

Follow Regular Circuit. This is especially true of an exchange releasing features. Where an exchange releases a general program the shows leave Washington and are put on a circuit, one exhibitor forwarding to another, until the train is late or the exhibitor fails to make shipment, they usually arrive at their destination in good time. But the feature exchanges it is an entirely different matter. The show may play Washington tonight, Raleigh N. C. tomorrow, and Wilmington, N. C. the following day.

The average exchange handling high-class features want their films to come into the local office at least every third time played. Unless this is done the film gets to be in bad condition, as they need constant attention to be kept in first-class condition. A film may arrive in the Washington office at 4 o'clock in the afternoon and must be inspected and reshipped on a



R. L. GOLDBERG,

The Times' humorist-artist working on pictures for the first of his animated cartoons to be shown shortly in motion picture theaters by the Pathe Company.

train leaving that night around 9 o'clock. The shipping clerk in the film exchange must not only know how to route his shows, but exactly the time the train leaves, when it arrives, whether or not that particular train carries express, and what express company operates over that road.

Requires Close Calculation. When exhibitors book shows they are very anxious to secure certain productions on a particular day of the week. The booker must be thoroughly familiar with the territory which is covered by the exchange and know exactly just how long it takes to ship a film so that it will arrive in the office in time to be inspected and get out to the next theater playing it. The least mistake in either the booking, shipping or of the part of the express company will cause not only a loss to the exhibitor, but to the exchange.

When an exhibitor books a show he is always pessimistic as to the amount he will take in, but if he should be disappointed and not receive his show he has lost from \$50 to \$100 more than he could have ever possible taken in. All these matters have to be adjusted with the exhibitor on an equitable basis and makes the lot of the exchange manager anything but a bed of roses.

In order to secure the greatest amount of efficiency in my office we have inaugurated a contest between the booking and shipping departments. Each department starts Monday morning with 1,000 points, and for every mistake which is made in which in any way affects the efficiency of either department a certain number of points are taken off. At the end of each week the department which has the highest efficiency record receives the cash prize. This has resulted in the elimination of a great number of small mistakes which were the result of carelessness.

LOCAL MENTION. Chaplin never fools 'em today. "His Musical Career" Va. The. with "The Campbells Are Coming." Sunday. "They Called Him Hero," a war thriller. Try our 5c Luncheon, Lincoln Cafe, 740 10th.

Phone Your Want Ad to The Times. Main 6260

# THREE BILLION SAW PICTURES LAST YEAR

Every Man, Woman, and Child in America Went to Theater Twenty-nine Times.

William C. DeMille, the dramatist, who wrote "Warrens of Virginia," "The Woman," and other plays for David Belasco, is devoting himself exclusively at present to writing for the motion picture screen. He has achieved signal success in that field of literature, as he calls it. He declares that the great inspiration when comes to writers for motion pictures is in the knowledge of the size of their great audience.

In the year 1915 there were roughly 2,000,000 paid admissions to the moving picture theaters of the United States, said Mr. DeMille recently when he was interviewed at the office of the Lasky company. "This means an average attendance of twenty-nine times a year for every man, woman, and child in the country," once a week for half the population of the country. Figures like these imply a great responsibility on the part of those who supply this tremendous demand, and men are now entering the field who are by training and artistic qualification to accept the responsibility.

Different From Stage. "As the new art of the photodrama develops it will differentiate itself more and more from the 'speakers' as certain zealous partisans call the older art. During the past year the photodrama has been getting closer to the spoken play in order to acquire certain elements of dramatic construction, but having acquired them it will, from now on, move along its own line of development, and the photodrama of the future will be even less like the drama than the photoplay of the past."

The photodrama is to be dominated by a small group of men as the theater has been. In its development it will reflect more truly than the drama the ideals of the mass, because the photodrama is not subject to local opinion; it needs no Broadway verdict, and is quite independent of the opinion of New York, the least American of any city in America.

Donald Crisp, the director of the Clune masterpiece, "Samana," is the owner of two letters which he treasures highly. One is from John McGroarty poet, historian and author of "The Mission Play." He wrote that Crisp had "caught not only the soul of Helen Hunt Jackson's story, but the soul of California itself." The other tribute was from Senator Del Valle the owner of "Annapolis, the home of Ramona. He calls the production the greatest work so far produced.

# TODAY'S BEST FILMS

By GARDNER MACK.

Circle, 2105 Pennsylvania avenue—Henry B. Walthall and Edna May in "The Strange Case of Mary Page," adapted from The Times serial story by Frederick Lewis (Lassman), fourth installment repeated today by request with Kitty Gordon in "As in a Looking Glass" (World Film Corp.). American, First street and Rhode Island avenue—Charles Richman and Norma Tallmadge in "The Battle Cry of Peace," adapted from Hudson Maxson's "Defenses America," by J. Stuart Blackton (V. S. L. E. Vitagraph). Strand, Ninth and D streets—Billie Burke in "Peep" (Triangle). Hippodrome Ninth street and New York avenue—Monna Vanna, directed from the play by Maurice Maeterlinck (Ambrosia). Crandall, Ninth and E streets—Ellet Clayton and Tom Moore in "Dollars and the Woman" (V. S. L. E.—Lubin). Masonic Auditorium, Thirteenth street and New York avenue—Nance O'Neil in "Souls in Bondage" (V. S. L. E.—Lubin). Meador's, 328 Eighth street southeast—Antonio Moreno in "Kennedy Square," adapted from the story by F. Hopkinson Smith (V. S. L. E.—Vitagraph). Garden, 421 Ninth street—Lillian Drew in "Vultures of Society" (V. S. L. E.—Lassman). Home, Twelfth and C streets north—M. Managuerite Snow in "The Untart," Metrop. Loew's Columbia, Twelfth and F streets—Blanche Sweet in "The Sowers" (Lasky). Olympic, 1311 U street, Richard Tucker and Carrol McConna in "When Love Is King" (Kleins-Eddison). Crandall's Apollo, 624 H street northeast—Bessie Barriscale in "The Golden Claw" (Triangle). Empress, 406 Ninth street—Lola Weber and Phillips Smalley in "Hop, the Devil's Brew" (Universal).

Note—These selections are made from programs prepared by the managers of the theaters concerned, and no responsibility is assumed for arbitrary changes without notice to The Times. They are based on the personality of the players and the producing company, and not personal inspection, except in special cases. G. M.

PHOTOPLAYS CIRCLE THEATER 2105 Penn. Ave. Today—Kitty Gordon in "As in a Looking Glass" WORLD PRODUCTION. By Request. The Strange Case of Mary Page (Lasky No. 1).

TOMORROW (SUNDAY) GRITTY'S Showman Achievement, "The Avenge Conscience" With Henry B. Walthall, Blanche Sweet and other stars of the "Birth of a Nation" cast.

# OHIO CENSORS BAR VILLA FROM SCREEN

Film Men Protest Rule of Guardians of Morals as Unjust Discrimination.

Francisco Villa is barred from the motion picture theaters of Ohio. This means pictures of Villa have been placed under the ban by the motion picture censors of Ohio, and that no motion picture showing the figure of the bandit chief can be shown within the borders of the State. This is the first time that action of this sort has even been taken by a censorship board, and it has raised a storm of protest from the film men.

The censors state: "Villa is a murderer and a bandit. Pictures of him shown on the screen are likely to inflame the populace. It is, therefore, considered highly desirable to prevent, at this time, the popular mind from becoming inflamed. Hence pictures showing Villa will not be permitted in Ohio."

The motion picture people were stunned for a moment at the action of the Ohio board as pictures of Villa were being sent out by all the news pictorial organizations as a matter of news. One of the big producing companies has thousands of feet of film showing

Villa's pictures and his forces, made by paying Villa a large sum to run his revolution in the day time so that it could be properly filmed. William A. Johnston, editor of the Motion Picture News refers to the action of the Ohio censors as an attempt to "sterilize history." Mr. Johnston protests against the action because he declares the newspapers are permitted to print pictures of Villa, and that the news films—which are all the films that are shown with pictures of the bandit—are simply showing in motion pictures what the newspapers show in still pictures.

The matter is to be taken into the courts immediately. It is understood that the Ohio newspapers will give the film men their assistance in the fight against the censor.

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PHOTOPLAYS		
<b>CRANDALL'S APOLLO</b> 624 H St. N. E. Northeast's Only Exclusive Feature Photoplay House.		
<b>SUNDAY</b> The Dainty Star of Infinite Charm <b>MARGUERITE CLARK</b> in "Prince and Pauper" Mark Twain's Best Loved Classic.		
<b>MONDAY</b> The Empress of Motion <b>NANCE O'NEIL</b> in a Masterful Production "SOULS IN BONDAGE"	<b>TUESDAY</b> The Noted Actress <b>KITTY GORDON</b> in a Modern Drama "AS IN A LOOK-ING GLASS"	<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Triangle-Fine Arts Presents <b>LILLIAN GISH</b> and Rosalia Lilly in "THE LILY AND THE ROSE" and the Keystone Comedy, "Great Vacuum Robbery"
<b>THURSDAY</b> The Noted English Star, <b>CONSTANCE COLLIER</b> in an Absorbing Drama, "TONGUES OF MEN"	<b>FRIDAY</b> The Famous Star, <b>ADELE BLOOD</b> Supported by Edwin Stevens in "THE DEVIL'S TOY"	<b>SATURDAY</b> Triangle-Fine Arts Presents <b>WILLARD MACK</b> in the Hawaiian Masterpiece, "ALOHA-OE" and the Keystone Comedy, "A VILLAGE SCANDAL" Featuring Raymond Hitchcock.

<b>CRANDALL'S</b>	
OPEN 11 A. M. to 11 P. M.	
<b>SUN.</b>	Return Engagement of the Distinguished Stars <b>ADELE BLOOD and EDWIN STEVENS</b> in "The Devil's Toy"
<b>MON. AND TUE.</b>	The Accomplished Star <b>ALICE BRADY</b> In Larry Evans' Celebrated Novel "Then I'll Come Back To You"
<b>WED.</b>	<b>ROBERT WARWICK</b> In a Return Showing of the Strong Feature "The Supreme Sacrifice"
<b>THURS. AND FRI.</b>	Equitable Presents the Eminent Dramatic Stars <b>JOHN MASON and CLARA WHIPPLE</b> In a Realistic Novel of the Present Day "THE REAPERS"
<b>SAT.</b>	<b>HOUSE PETERS and JUNE ELVIDGE</b> In a Return Engagement of the Great Drama "The Hand of Peril"
OUR LADIES' MATINEES After the tire some round of the stores, nothing is more refreshing than a visit to our matinees. Only the most carefully selected features are shown. "High Class Photoplays, Not 'Movies' at CRANDALL'S."	

<b>EMPRESS</b> 416 9th St. N. W. Home of Celebrated Fox Photoplays	
<b>SUNDAY and MONDAY</b> <b>GEORGE WALSH and DORIS PAWN</b> In a Virile Drama of Love and Adventure "BLUE BLOOD AND RED"	
<b>TUESDAY</b> Return Engagement of the Film Sensation <b>WILLIAM FARNUM</b> in "The Bondman"	
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> Another Great Bluebird Production <b>VIOLET MERSEREAU</b> in "AUTUMN"	
<b>THURSDAY and FRIDAY</b> <b>CLAIRE WHITNEY-STUART HOLMES</b> Supported By Robert B. Mantell and Genevieve Hamper In a Great Fox Production "A WIFE'S SACRIFICE"	
<b>SATURDAY</b> Wm. Fox Presents the Noted Actress <b>BERTHA KALICH</b> in "SLANDER"	

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<b>10c</b> 10 A. M. <b>GARDEN</b> 6 P. M. <b>15c</b> STARS DATES PLAYS <b>LILLIAN DREW</b> TODAY No. 2—ETHEL TERRY in "TRAILING A TAILOR"	<b>10c</b> 10 A. M. <b>STRAND</b> 6 P. M. <b>15c</b> STARS DATES PLAYS <b>VIRGINIA HAMMOND</b> TODAY No. 2—ROSE MELVILLE in "ALMOST A HEROINE"	
<b>Plus the latest equipment</b> explaining the superiority of our work. Every man in our employ has had years of experience. Our factory is equipped with the very latest machinery. <b>C. D. Hulse</b> OPTICAL CO. Removed to 1429 11. South Bldg.		<b>AUTOMOBILES</b> Motorcycles and Accessories. <b>GASOLINE CARS.</b> <b>National</b> COMBS MOTOR CO. VI. Ave. and H. N. W. <b>Studebaker</b> Commercial Auto & Supply Co. \$19 14th St. <b>ELECTRIC CARS.</b> Emerson & Orme. 1407 H St. <b>ACCESSORIES.</b> <b>National Electric Supply Co.</b> 1228-1230 N. Y. Ave.
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